

Okolona Messenger.

FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE SUNNY SOUTH.

ARE STEINBERGER & SONS.

\$1.00 A Year in Advance.

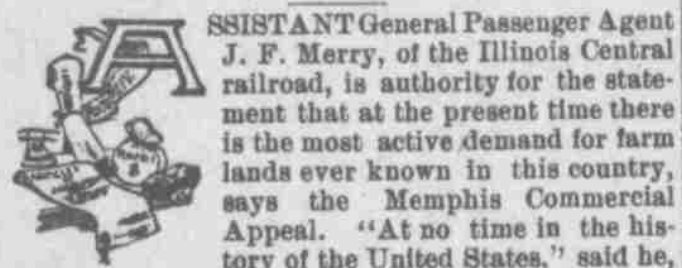
OUR AIM: To Tell the Truth, Obey the Law, and Make Money. OUR MOTTO: Talk for Home, Work for Home, and Fight for Home.

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INVESTORS ARE LOOKING SOUTH.



ASSISTANT General Passenger Agent J. F. Merry, of the Illinois Central railroad, is authority for the statement that at the present time there is the most active demand for farm lands ever known in this country, says the Memphis Commercial Appeal. "At no time in the history of the United States," said he,

"has there been such a phenomenal advance in prices as during the past three years.

"Unimproved hardwood timber lands of the best quality are yet on the market at points in Mississippi, between Memphis and Vicksburg, from \$7 to \$10 per acre. The cost of clearing and fencing these lands is not to exceed \$10 per acre, and, when cleared, they will grow a bale of cotton worth from \$40 to \$50 per bale, or 60 bushels of corn worth from 60 cents to \$1 per bushel, to the acre. Every real estate agent who has studied the agricultural conditions of this country understands how, with the rapid increase in population, making a constantly increasing demand for everything eatable, it is utterly impossible for fertile lands to remain at present values in any section of our country either north or south.

"Southern farm lands are too low, as compared with the market value of southern farm products. To illustrate: In Iowa lands selling in the market for \$60 to \$75 per acre are rented for only \$3 per acre. In Mississippi, and especially in the great cotton belt, Mississippi valley, improved plantations can be bought at from \$30 to \$35 per acre, cash, or, what is better at the present high price of cotton, for 100 pounds of lint cotton per acre; and upon which the taxes are not more than half what they are in Illinois and Iowa.

"All indications point to an increased demand and increased local market for all kinds of southern farm products. The development of southern oil fields furnishing cheap fuel is attracting the attention of manufacturers.

"The construction of an interoceanic canal, whether at Panama or Nicaragua, will make New Orleans the gateway of important new markets that use largely the mining, manufacturing and agricultural products of the south. It will be the means of calling the attention of thousands of tourists and capitalists to the fertile lands of the Mississippi valley. It will result in large investments of northern capital, which is invariably followed by immigration and a rapid advance in the price of farm lands.

"In Illinois the advance has been from \$90 to \$150 per acre; in Iowa from \$35 to \$75 and even higher; in Minnesota from \$15 to \$50, and in South Dakota from \$2.50 to \$30. Real estate prophets and others have each year predicted the top had been reached and that prices must decline. Such however, has not been the case. On the contrary not only practical farmers, but bankers, mechanics, merchants and manufacturers, with idle money have shown their confidence in the future of cultivatable lands by making liberal land investments and the prices have continued to go higher and higher.

"The question now agitating the minds of the real estate agents, through whom 90 per cent of all the farm lands are sold, is, where can we find low priced real estate, and where will be the next great advance in lands? I advise all real estate agents and others who handle farm lands that every indication now points to the south as the center of the next great boom."

This succinct array of facts with many others is being set forth in real pamphlet form and circulated by Mr. Merry throughout the country, for which the south, and especially Mississippi, is under a debt of gratitude to him.

Relatively to officers and men in the navy, we shall soon have ships to burn. We have laid down the keels of many more battleships, cruisers, gunboats, destroyers and torpedo boats than we have of the keels of future sailor men. We shall build the ships—we are building a score of them now. Shall we burn them? Scarcely. We shall merely put some of the best of them out of commission, and lay them up at the navy yards, with a slender watch of men to paint them and grease the guns now and then, and leave them there to be forgotten. It is always well, as even a ferryman could tell us, that a master and his mates shall be in touch with their boat, if they wish to get the best results out of her. Known well to them, she acts as she will act for no stranger. In war, the strange sympathy that exists between men and ships may turn the tide of a battle. But we are planning to lay some of our best and newest ships on the shelf until we need them and then to put aboard them suddenly crews that are a mixture of strangers to them and of utter lubbers, and send them forth to instant victory. For a practical people, we are guilty of some acts of the most impracticable folly ever heard of. This business of building ships and providing no men for them is one of these instances of our folly. And our continued indifference to the necessity of holding up, by helpful legislation, a merchant marine from which sailors for our navy can be recruited, is another.

It is proper that the United States should go about the task which it has to administer in the Philippine islands in a way of its own. No one else has attempted to do the liberal and constructive thing that we are doing there. England has never

attempted it in India. Her realm there, as well as in Borneo and the other Malay states, is made up partly of an absolute despotism of her own, as in Bengal, Madras, the Northwest provinces, and the Punjab, and of protected native despotisms, as in Hyderabad and Baroda. There is no Indian legislature, and probably never will be. The rule of Holland over more than 24,000,000 near kinsmen of our Filipinos in Java is absolute, unqualified. No legislature there—no admission of the natives to the smallest civil authority. The thing that we began to do in the Philippines when we landed there, and kept up in spite of war, has never been done after centuries of profound peace in Java. Even the land has been taken by the Dutch, and the people who earn wealth for them by working on it are taxed merely for the privilege of living. In Formosa the Japanese have a somewhat similar problem to ours in the Philippines. They have not yet solved it; but so far as they promise to solve it, it is wholly on a Japanese, and not on a native Formosan, basis. In the Philippines we are doing a thing unique in colonial history. We are giving administrative freedom and participation in government to a native Malay people who have never had them. It is true that we are supposed to possess an advantage in having a Christian population to deal with. But government is not a matter of religion, and no one can claim that Christian Filipinos are any fitter to govern themselves than Japanese Buddhists or Parsee fire worshippers. As a matter of fact, their faith has not endowed them with civic virtues above other Orientals. The United States is carrying Anglo-Saxon principles into the Orient with true American confidence. We earnestly hope they will thrive there. If they do, the Philippine civil rule bill, passed the other day, will prove the magna charta of a new Orient. If they do not, and we are forced to admit that only the illiberal Dutch and English principles, are available for the Orient, we shall at least have had the satisfaction of trying a great and benevolent.

THE EXPANSION CRAZE.

WITHIN a very brief period we have annexed Hawaii by taking the short cut of a joint resolution of congress, after it was found that the treaty route was impossible; we have appropriated Porto Rico as a war indemnity; we have bought the Philippines, a very small part of which we have yet actually possessed, and we have bargained for the Danish West Indies. It would seem that these requisitions should satisfy our territorial greed for a while, but, though our deal with Denmark has not yet been consummated, the state department has begun negotiations with that government for Greenland.

It is said that the expansionist statesmen have had this enterprise in view for ten years past but it never took on the color of probability until a very short time ago. It is stated on what appears to be good authority that St. Peary, the famous arctic explorer, has been employed to gather data and give an estimate of the value and possibilities of this extensive land, which the daring Norsemen knew centuries before Christopher Columbus was born. The main reason ascribed for the desire to acquire Greenland is the same as that which caused the United States to purchase Alaska—to hem in Canada and give us a still securer hold on this continent.

The present and probable commercial value of Greenland is problematical.

The country undoubtedly contains very valuable mineral deposits and its fisheries are the best in the world.

In its southern part are ceyolite mines, the entire output of which comes to the United States.

Near Disco Island are large deposits of coal, which American explorers and fishermen use. There are vast whale and halibut fisheries conducted entirely by Massachusetts fishermen. Iron and copper abound, and it is believed other mineral wealth of Greenland is large.

Denmark owns the country south of Melville bay and has done something in the way of colonizing it. But her government is maintained there at a heavy annual loss that she is hardly able to stand, and the report that she is endeavoring to unload this unprofitable territory on us is probably true. Most of the paying enterprises in Greenland are already in the hands of citizens of this country, whose rights are perfectly protected by Denmark. They are said to be indifferent about the alleged purchase scheme, but the element in this country that has gone daft on the subject of expansion is enthusiastic over it and may have its way.

The suggestion that the next Presidential candidate should come from the South is being considered and debated all over the country. The arguments that all the Presidents except Fillmore (sic) have come from the North during the last half century; that the South rejoined the Union thirty-seven years ago, but has as yet been denied representation upon the nation ticket; and that such monopoly by a single section is contrary to the spirit of the constitution, are irrefutable, and the more people think them over the more popular and practical this suggestion will appear.

A Baltimore paper finds that Mr. Cleveland was a "brilliant success." And so he was, from the Democratic viewpoint. He got the office.

IMMENSE FARM VALUES.

THE value of the farm property in the United States is so enormous that very few persons know how many figures it requires to express it.

The extent to which it has increased between 1890 and 1900 is astounding.

But it is not after all surprising that a country containing three million square miles of territory, by far the greater part of which is productive, and more than seventy-five millions of people should make a showing of agricultural wealth that can be approached by no other nation.

In 1900 there were four times as many farms in the United States as there were in 1850. The increase of the number of farms between 1890 and 1900 was 25 percent, a rate that no other country approximated.

The increase in the value of farms in the United States has been as remarkable as that of their number.

In 1900 the number of farms was 5,739,657 and their total value was \$16,874,694,274.

The value of farm property increased 24.8 percent from 1890 to 1900, thus keeping pace almost exactly with the increase of the number of farms.

The increase of farm values was 7 percent greater than that of the country's population.

The statement of the census bureau to the effect that the total value of farm products was 92.6 percent greater in 1900 than it was in 1890 seems incredible until the qualification which the bureau places on it is considered.

It is explained that the enumeration was much more complete in 1900 than it had ever been before.

The big item of farm animals sold and slaughtered was not included in the farm values of 1890, but was taken in by the census of 1900 and increased those values 40 percent.

The wonderful growth of farm interests has not, however, been sufficient to check the trend of population to the cities.

The comparative growth of Chicago and that of the state of Illinois is a striking illustration in point. Chicago, with 1,099,850 people in 1890, had 1,698,575 in 1900, a gain of 598,725. Illinois, outside of Chicago, starting with 2,726,501 people in 1890, had 3,122,975, a gain of only 396,474, in 1900.

Many other comparisons of like character and hardly less impressive could be made.

Another and an even more alarming tendency is the rapid increase of wealth in a few hands.

There is now one concern in the United States that has a capitalization one twelfth as great as the total value of all the farms in the country.

Every year the number of immense fortunes increases and there is a corresponding increase of the number of very poor persons.

The drift of population of cities and of wealth into the hands of comparatively a few persons is one of the greatest misfortunes and gravest dangers of our time.

In an excellent editorial on Child Labor, the Houston Herald says: "It is to be hoped that not only South Carolina, but all the Southern states in which are located cotton factories and textile mills, will put a stop to the employment of children therein. Whatever advantages may ever accrue to a community from the establishment of such industries, from a financial standpoint, are offset by the immorality engendered among the employees; for it is a well known fact that a large proportion of the female employees are noted for their lack of chastity and virtue. The country simply places a premium upon prostitution by permitting the employment of young girls and boys in these factories at starvation wages, and the South would better get along without cotton mills than have the health of children impaired, their vitality sapped their constitutions undermined, and their lives corrupted by such a life. Let the South say to mill owners, 'If you would run your establishments, do so with adult labor; you shall not squeeze dividends out of the bodies of our little children.' Who is responsible for child labor and its consequent horrors in the Southern States? The Democratic party which claims to be the friend of Labor. It has had undisputed control in the South for many years, yet this curse which is destroying the bodies and souls of the little children of the poor still flourishes, while even the capitalistic Republican party of the North has at least partially restricted it in the states under its control. When will the laboring classes of the South learn that the Bourbon democracy is not only its enemy, but a double-dyed hypocrite in addition?"

Those citizens who are so much worried that the government may be robbed should remember that there's such a thing as self-inflicted wrongs. The last Republican congress was a part of the government.

Probably it would be as well not to think of forcing Cuba into the Union until we open the door to those Western territories that are knocking so anxiously for admission.

It does look a little inconsistent to punish a man for counterfeiting nickles to be used in beating a slot machine operated in defiance of law. It is something like unlawful resistance to a trust.

WORLD-TRUSTS AND THEIR MENACE.

THE news comes from London, vouched for by the Daily Mail, and St. Louis Republic, that the three monster oil interests of Rockefeller, Rothschild and Nobei have entered into a working agreement, thus organizing the greatest trust the world has ever known.

On the same day the story is telegraphed from Chicago that the great American meat packers are arranging for a world-wide combination to gain control of the packing business and that the plans are shortly to be perfected at a secret meeting which will probably be held in some European city.

Both reports are denied by the trust magnates, but the denials seem to be the usual protesting which precedes a merger.

This movement in the direction of international monopoly is a logical movement. It is a consistent development from the situation that has prevailed in this country during the past few years.

The American combines will find it easy to draw the more important European houses into a working partnership with them. Such consolidations, representing billions of dollars, will exercise a gigantic power in antagonism to the general good. The combines will work together in a federation, or combine of combines, against the public.

Thoughtful students of the times cannot but see in this monopolistic trend what is perhaps the most serious menace which the world's trade has ever confronted. If these international combines are perfected, the healthful principle of competition will be utterly destroyed. The world's producers, who must sell their products to the trusts, will be absolutely at the mercy of the latter. The world's consumers, who must buy the trusts' products, will be equally helpless and subject to trust dictation. No tale of feudalism or of serfdom ever recited in history reveals the world's peoples most hopelessly subjected to a malign mastery in destruction of their rights than is now threatened by the contemplated system of world trusts. The situation now assuming ominous shape demands the attention of the friends of the people.

The story that the Countess Castellane will pay a trifling little debt of \$400,000 for her husband, who notwithstanding his title is not much account, will recall renewed attention to this couple who have been conspicuously in the public eye since their marriage. Certainly the countess is not to be condemned for settling her husband's debts, large or small. If she loves him it was a pleasure to her to relieve him of embarrassment and annoyance. If she does not love him pride and vanity would also suggest the payment.

There are many grounds upon which to base the inference that the marital life of the countess has not been all roses. It is unfair, however, to declare that her fate serves her right as she sold herself for a title. No one can read her heart. She may have married him for love and might have married him had he been a French peasant in wooden shoes. But whatever the motives pronounced her one cannot but contrast her lot with that of her sister Helen. The title of countess, an empty honor at best, is a tawdry thing compared to that won by Miss Helen Gould, a womanly woman. One sister striving after social recognition, linked to an erratic and spendthrift husband, if no worse might be said about him, her pretensions scorned by those upon whom she fawns, her private life unmasked to the pitiless ridicule of the public, is in striking contrast to the life of the sister whose days are a record in gentle service, whose wealth is spent in charitable deeds, and of whom it may be said that her life and example typify all that is highest, noblest and best in American womanhood. One sister wears the disputed title of countess, the other is secure in the undisputed title of queen among women.

It is reported that Aguinaldo contemplates a trip to the United States, says the Mail and Breeze. Now Aguinaldo is not a person that in our judgment is worth while to make any fuss over, but we would be rather glad to see him come. We want the little yellow rooster to have a chance to see just what kind of a country this is that has gathered him in. We would like to have him travel from New York to San Francisco and then take a jaunt from the lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. If he has any sense he will see that he and every other Filipino ought to get down on his knees and express their thanks that they have been hitched up with this big and bully country. But if Ag. should experience no sentiment of gratitude, which we think he will not, he would at least get an idea of how little use it is for him and the balance of his Filipino insurgents to buck this government. He will likewise find another thing and that is that the anties who are meeting and passing resolutions condemning the government and the army no more represent the sentiment of this country than a dead-bitten Texan broncho represents the blooded horses of the United States. Everybody who knows Aguinaldo concedes that he is pretty smart; if that is so he will learn a lot of things that will be to his advantage and to the advantage of his followers in the Philippine islands. Let him come.

It must be heartbreaking to J. Pierpont Morgan to see a big deal like the Rock Island merger carried on without his assistance.